

WRESTLING FORUM

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VOLUME III

ISSUE 5

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THERE AIN'T NO TIMEOUTS IN THE GAME OF LIFE

That would make a good title for a country western song, eh? Anyway, if there were timeouts allowed, I'd sure take one right about now. Things around here have been hectic this last couple of weeks. This past week I've put in about 56 hours at work, plus we finally mailed out the yearbooks. I had to put my father back in the hospital this past weekend so I have been real hard to get a hold of. My apologies to those of you who are getting used to hearing my wife say, "No, he's not here right now". Unfortunately, things are going to get even busier during the next two weeks.

Next issue is going to contain more information than any other we've ever done. In addition to regular features such as the barometer and Class act of the month and dipstick of the month, we'll be featuring part two of Jeff Siegel's "The night Wrestling Went Classy", part one of which you'll find in this issue. Add that to live reports by yours truly on the NWA show in Peoria and the WWF's Wrestling Challenge taping in Springfield plus full coverage of Wrestlemania IV and the NWA's Clash of Champions and you've got not only a bulletin that's busting at the seams (it'll go 32 pages as opposed to our regular 28 page format). Busy, busy busy.

If that's not enough to be working on, the first edition of the NAWF magazine is going to be published during the first week of April. The staff of that magazine are at this moment compiling the reports we need there.

Without any further ado, welcome to the March 15th issue of Wrestling Forum. Just to remind you, we publish on the 15th and 30th of each month and mail the following day. Cost per issue at present is \$1.25 here in North America and \$2.50 overseas. You can subscribe in any increment up to six month's worth.

As for the yearbook, it has been mailed out and you should have it by now (those of you who ordered it). There are only three or four copies left so if you haven't ordered, before you do, call first.

To solve some problems those of you have had in getting hold of me, the best time is either weekday mornings or weekdays after 11:30 pm (my time). Really. I stay up almost every night until about 1 am so it's alright to call at that hour.

There have been a couple of internal changes here also. My wife Mary is taking even a more active role than what she has in the past. She is now handling all subscriptions (including yearbook orders so you don't have to talk to me personally to see if there are any more available). She's also taken over a lot of the typing duties. Without her, this bulletin would be about two weeks late. I'm doing quite a bit of the writing at work during breaks and then she types it the next day. She's also handling the retyping of features that come through the mail. Next time you call and she answers, be sure to be nice to her. She's a gem (she also doesn't know I'm typing this).

A little unfinished business...I'd like to tell you that the Knoxville High School basketball team won the state tournament...unfortunately, I can't. They ran into a buzzsaw called Peoria Bergan that did the same thing to us that we've been doing to other teams all season. In the sectional championships, they kicked our collective butts back to Knoxville.

Well, with all that out of the way, let's get down to our favorite subject...here's a little wrestling news and views...

VIDEO REVIEW
BY BOBBY BAUM
"PRO WRESTLING CAMP-THE VIDEO"

Could it be? A pro wresling how to tape? Or is it just an hour long commercial for Eddie Sharkey's wrestling school?

Well, yes, it is a how to tape (it doesn't even include an ad for Eddie Sharkey's school)- but don't expect to learn to wrestle, even just as a hobby, from this tape alone. It's extremely limited.

The tape is only 27 min. long. It is very well produced except that the sound level is too low at times. The first half consists of interviews featuring several wrestlers & Eddie Sharkey telling how they got into wrestling (which is certainly more interesting than the interviews shown on most wrestling shows). There is then 10 min. of actual wrestling instruction. There is no mention of padding other than a caution to use proper equipment. The tape covers how to land from a somersault (the feet high backfall) but doesn't show the more difficult head high backfall, which is probably the single most important move in wrestling. The tape then explains how to do about 10 different moves. There is nothing at all about how to work a match.

The tape is clearly aimed at the average fan rather than the serious would-be wrestlers. It even views wrestling as a competitive sport. Nevertheless, nonwrestlers will learn something from this tape and probably could, given padding, create a simple choreographed demonstration routine if they really wanted to.

One note of interest to Wrestling Forum Readers: This tape features Larry Butcher Cameron, the wrestler recently managed by Jon Gallagher.

This tape is a fascinating novelty item and I recommend it as such. As a how to tape, it is useful but very elementary. Anyone interested in how wrestling is done would undoubtedly be better off getting the "Secrets of Pro Wrestling" tape (which I haven't seen yet).

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AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

I was prepared to write the official AWA obituary this issue and whatdaya know...they still ain't dead!

Now I have no idea what the idea behind this first item is...Mr. Saito has come over and will be full time once the month's vacation is over. That much, I can believe. But Saito on an interview said that he was bringing RIKI CHOSHU. That would be news to Antonio Inoki, New Japan, and probably Riki himself. But the question everyone is asking is, "Why did Verne let Saito tell us Choshu is coming if he's not?" At first I just figured that Verne had to throw out a big name to be coming in after the shut down. If he'd have said someone like the Road Warriors, Hawk and Animal might have made a personal trip to the Twin Cities and straighten Verne out. So he had to use the name of someone on the other side of the world. But then, how many fans know Choshu's name? When he toured the United States in 1982 he was barely more than a jobber. There aren't more than a couple thousand fans (other than smart fans--and we never believe Verne anyway) who would be impressed by the name Riki Choshu. Then I realized what all this was...I had become the victim of Gagne-logic.

Otherwise, the latest set of TV tapes from Las Vegas had a couple of surprise appearances. Jerry Lawler came in for a squash match as did Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond who were in as heels. Nothing should be read into this as all three appeared just to help fill out the card.

Ricky Rice was also on and I got my look at him in the AWA. He looked pretty bad which is a shock. I know from personal experience that he can work his butt off when he wants. Just to put things into perspective, his tag team partner Steve Olsonoski and their jobber opponents (one who was Dennis Stamp who is usually good) all were worse. Ricky did throw a couple of his high dropkicks which was already some of the bad in the biz.

Speaking of dreadful work, Diamond and Tanaka had some problems with one of the jobbers. They faced this guy who just would not sell or cooperate. Paul kept whipping him into the ropes and going for a clothesline. The jobber would either duck or just stop short. I mean he'd just come to a complete halt and needless to say, it looked horrid. Even the slingshot DDT was awkward and clumsily done.

On the same show, Baron Von Raschke wrestled (definitely not the right verb) Sheik Advon Kaissey. The only remarkable thing about the ordeal was the new growth of hair on the Baron's upper lip.

And what do you think of this new announcer they've come up with? His name is Jim Marshall and from what I can decipher from the commentary, he's some sort of a sports journalist from Los Angeles. For a first time job, he didn't do that bad of a job as he was a breath of fresh air compared to Ron Trongard. Less than half way through though, he became guilty by association and slipped to the normal mediocrity of AWA standards.

One final note concerning the shutdown...it had been rumored, and quite heavily I might add, that Verne had just packed it in and folded the AWA. For a week, I tried calling the AWA offices and there was no answer. I wasn't real concerned because at least I didn't get a recording telling me the number had been disconnected. Fortunately, they are back to normal this week, answering the phone and hanging up on me.

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WRESTLERS ARE PEOPLE TOO

These insights are provided by one who had access to WWF wrestlers during the 1970's. Again, our source has chosen to remain nameless.

Bruno Sammartino--Very suspicious of outsiders and would never let his guard down about the business. Once he and Killer Kowalski worked a one hour draw and fought all the way back to the dressing room. I was on the other side of the doors when Bruno burst in laughing and yelling, "let me at him." He saw me and then tried to act like he was serious. I left to spare him any further adlibbing. One sure way to get him going was to mention the name of the Sheik (Ed Farhat). He'd always follow with a 15-minute discourse about gimmick performers and how he never relied on costumes, aliases, etc. Never mind that his opponent was always the one in Nazi regalia or throwing salt and that it takes two to make a main event. Big ego. Loved to talk about his sellout string at MSG but don't ever mention the fact that he nearly killed the building in 1969 by staying on top too long. Hated fan club bulletins, largely because they printed results and revealed to the small fan club world that the same shows were run on every stop around the horn. His own fan club bulletin once ran a list of real and ring names, which caused him a great deal of embarrassment. Bruno had enough power to make or break a guy with his recommendation so no one ever had a bad word to say (very loudly) about him.

Harry Zbyszko--In this era, he was just starting and seemed to love all aspects of the business, especially attention from fans. Because of his association with Bruno, he rarely had to do jobs even though he was working opening matches almost every night. Was a babyface and his desire to be a heel was laughed at since he was considered such a natural face.

George Steel--In this era, he was pretty much a straight heel. He hadn't developed the moron routine yet and still did interviews. Was one of the few wrestlers I saw who actually needed time to get in and out of character. He'd emerge from the dressing room, pounding walls and yelling. Would go into stands to frighten hecklers and once chased a guy completely out of the building in sub-freezing weather. Steele loved to scare people and was always threatening new referees and ring announcers. Once when a fan hit him with a crumpled paper cup, he gave the cops a sign and they dragged the guy into the hallway adjacent to the dressing room. While they held the fan by the arms, Steele suddenly burst in and stood inches away from the petrified fan, screaming and spraying the man with spit and sweat. Stayed in character around everybody. He always regretted a Wrestling World story early in his career that legitimately dealt with his double life as a high school teacher.

Killer Kowalski--A nice but distant guy who was willing to talk about anything but the business. Perhaps it was because he had such a wide range of interests, which included vegetarianism and religion, but he never lapsed into stories about the "good old days" or the life and hard times on the circuit. Should have been a teacher.

Prof. Toru Tanaka--A good guy whose favorite topic of conversation was his time as a drill instructor in the U.S. Marines. Very friendly but was nonetheless cautious around fans and very protective of the business. In public, he'd prefer to say virtually nothing rather than drop the affected Japanese accent he used on TV. One-on-one, he was an entertaining person.

Don DeNucci--A prince of a guy who was great with fans. He'd talk with them and sign autographs endlessly. In fact, the other wrestlers used to kid him about his willingness to sign. While DeNucci wasn't open about the business (very few were in this era), he seemed more relaxed about it than most and accepted outsiders around the dressing room.

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NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

Just when you thought Dusty Rhodes could never, ever come up with any more stupid lines, he gets on WTBS and tells the entire country that if they don't watch the free show on 3/27 that "I'm gonna come down your Chimney at Christmas and choke your kids!" I could almost hear our subscribers chanting in unison, "DIPSTICK! DIPSTICK!" I loved it though when Larry Zbyszko came out a while later and said, "so now he ADMITS he's a child boater!"

speaking of Larry, doesn't it appear that he's having a lot more fun here in the NWA than he did in the AWA? Of course when you've got people to work in front of, that might help.

Here's the line up for the Peoria show...Flair defends against Sting, the road Warriors go against two of the Three Stooges, Ron Garvin vs Ivan Koloff, Spike Huber wrestles Steve Regal (huh?) and some of Sharkey's guys will be down. Note that there is no Dusty on the card, so that means I can sit in the front row with confidence that a whale will not be coming in for a landing in my lap.

The syndicated package had an interesting match recently with Barry Windham challenging Mike Rotundo for the TV title. Not once was mentioned of their past relationship (either in the WWF or Florida). The match ended with Sullivan interfering and tossing a coat hanger to Mike who used it to choke Barry. Barry sold it as well as anyone has ever sold anything. The whole Varsity Club began dragging Barry back to the dressing room before Luger made the save. The varsity club have been using the hanger quite a bit as of late. They also used it on the WTBS show this past weekend when Jimmy Garvin went after the belt.

That match saw Garvin getting a pin on Rotundo. Kevin Sullivan reached through and put Mike's foot on the ropes after the three count and the referee saw the foot there after he had counted and ordered the match restarted. It didn't take long before the coat hanger made its way into the ring. Garvin was a sub for Shane Douglas who had trouble getting to the TV studios that night. Douglas is still around and I understand that there was no problem with him...they just wanted to get the Garvin - Rotundo feud started as they will be meeting in the Clash of Champions.

How much is Crockett going to hurt McMahon with the free show? Well, if my phone conversations are any indication...bad. Lots of people are telling me that they will be content to read about the WWIV show in the Observer and Forum and wait for the video tape to hit the stores. Meanwhile, they'll watch the live show on TBS. It's very possible that a lot of the marks are thinking the same thing and Crockett is banking on it. Reportedly, there is going to be a major talent raid on Crockett after WWIV. They are beefing up for it here. The main target will probably be Sting. I can't think of anyone else they could get that would really mean anything to them.

The blackmail angle still continues, I guess. Half the time, Dusty pretends that it doesn't exist and yet others, he talks about the envelope containing EEEEEEE-vil! Baby Doll and Larry Z are claiming that several magazines and tabloid newspapers are bidding for copies. Throw my hat in the ring as well...I'll give you 1.29 for the contents.

Tony Suber, a perennial jobber got a win over a masked man this past weekend. I was so impressed by the masked man that I can't even remember his name. Shades of the mulkies. Really, it was a nice surprise, but running the same almost exact thing two years in a row is a little much to stretch the imagination for.

Here's something I found interesting...I got a mini catalog of NWA merchandise in the mail this week. It's full of t-shirts, bandannas, etc and most of it is listed at 25%-50% off. What's interesting is that most of the stuff is either Rock and Roll Express or Four Horsemen (with Lex) stuff...there's even a t-shirt with Ole as the fourth horseman! No wonder they're discounting the stuff, huh? I only can find one Road Warrior related item and that's a bandanna. The catalog itself has a \$2.00 price tag on it, but if you write a nice letter to Charlotte Sports Promotions, Box 11390, Charlotte, NC 28220, I'm sure they'll see that you get one..

Sting pretty well seems to be headlining the cards across the country with Flair. That's a good call on someone's part (Dusty) because right now Sting seems to be one of the hottest properties Crockett has. They've been saving Luger vs Flair matches for a couple of reasons, one of which is, in case they need the match to draw some crowds. The second is because Lex may be next in line to get to wear the belt for a short while (remember...Ric has to win the belt a few more times to beat the record of that guy who took off for Titan) but they don't want to change it so close to the last one.

Crockett's show on the 27th has had some impact on WMIV already. Titan will be rerunning the show at 8:00 eastern for those who missed it the first time around. That's what the ad for our cable company is saying at least. Our cable company also has phone solicitors calling people with cable TV in order to try to sell them the show. One part of the sales pitch is that if you order WMIV, you get pay per view (including whatever movie they're showing) all day Saturday and Sunday. Me thinks that Crockett definitely has them worried.

Nikita Koloff should be back sooner than expected. He was originally going to take six months off, but I've heard now that he's due next month. I hope that translates into good news for him.

Also word that a fourth horseman will probably been named either just before or just after the Crockett Cup in April. Seems they're tired of people asking why they call it four when there's only three.

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PENCIL POINTS

PRO...

I wanted to mention that I enjoyed the past two feature articles (Speaking the Language and Tools of the Trade). I've been a "smart fan" for a few years by sponsoring some independent cards in my area. However, I was still not sure of what some of the wrestlers meant when they talked in their jargon. I picked up a lot of it through the bulletins, but still, I was never quite sure what a "high spot" was. Being in the position I am, I was too embarrassed to either ask. It gave me a better understanding of what they were talking about in the locker rooms. Thanks again.

-NAME WITHHELD-

-Pennsylvania-

AND CON

Regarding the article "Speaking the Language", I'll be shocked if that one article doesn't catch you more flak than anything you've ever put in the bulletin (Primarily from any and all correspondents and contacts you've got within the business)! I don't believe it was your intention, but the article came off like an attempt to hurt the business. It certainly gives a ton of ammunition to those in the business who say that the bulletins and newsletters are harmful. I'll leave it to others to be more elaborate and simply say that I've never seen it as the job or business of a bulletin to "smarten up" marks to that degree. It stunk when Wrestling Eye magazine did it and it did when you did it.

-name withheld-

EDITOR: I'M GOING TO INVOKE THE DOUBLE STANDARD LAW HERE (IT'S OKAY FOR ME TO EXPOSE THE BUSINESS BUT NOT NEWSSTAND MAGAZINES). SINCE OUR BULLETIN IS AIMED AT INSIDERS OR NON MARKS, I DON'T FEEL THAT WE GAVE ANYTHING AWAY WITH THE LANGUAGE ARTICLE (VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3). WE USE THOSE TERMS EVERY ISSUE ANYWAY, AND MANY READERS HAD EXPRESSED INTEREST IN AN ARTICLE OF THAT SORT. WRESTLING EYE, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS A NEWSSTAND MAGAZINE THAT IS NOT SURE WHETHER IT SHOULD BE AIMED AT MARKS OR SMARTS. SINCE IT IS READILY AVAILABLE, IT SHOULD NOT BE PRINTING ARTICLES SUCH AS THAT ONE. THE FORUM IS A LITTLE MORE DIFFICULT TO GET. YOU CAN'T PICK IT UP ON THE NEWSSTAND. YOU HAVE TO SEND FOR IT. YOU'RE RIGHT THOUGH, THE ARTICLE WASN'T MEANT TO EITHER HURT OR EXPOSE THE BUSINESS. IT WAS MEANT TO MERELY CLEAR UP SOME THINGS. BY THE WAY, THE ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN WITH THE HELP OF SEVERAL IN THE BUSINESS WHO HAD NO OBJECTION TO US PRINTING SOMETHING OF THIS NATURE. IN ABOUT A MONTH I'M GOING TO DO A FEATURE ON WHAT SOME OF THOSE IN THE BUSINESS THINK OF THE NEWSLETTERS. THANKS FOR THE INPUT.

DEVIL WORSHIP ALIVE AND WELL

In the NWA report you made an observation that Kevin Sullivan is no longer doing the devil worship gimmick. Depending on what view you take on the "Dungeons and Dragons" game, that's no altogether true. The religious zealots have repeatedly proclaimed dungeons and Dragons as a form of Satan worship. Shyster lawyers are now using it as a murder defense. Anyway, keeping in mind that I know very little about the game, if I'm not mistaken, the "Gamesmaster" refers to the head character who calls all the shots and with out who, no one can make a move (sort of the Virgil Runnels of Dungeons and Dragons).

-JACK THOMPSON-

-Salt Lake City-

ANSWERING THE SINGH QUESTION

In the February 29th issue (Calgary report) you asked, "What's with all these Singh's?" re: Akham Singh. First off, Singh is a common name among people from India. Thus to fit in with the Karachi Vice he had to have an Indian sounding name, not just a foreign sounding name since he was brought in as a referee by the Karachi Vice (it was also reported in the Observer that Akham is the brother of the Great Gama and trained by the Harts so it also may be his real name). A brief history on the Karachi Vice. They were formed in earlt 86, (shortly after Stampede reopened) when the Great Gama converted Mike Shaw over to his religion. Shaw then became Makham Singh. The name Karachi comes from Karachi Pakistan, the city where Gama is billed from. At one point all the members wore turbans but now only Gama and Akham do. Gama also worked in the WWF back in 84 as Gama Singh. Since being converted Makham has been a main event wrestler in Calgary, except for the summer of 86 when he worked the Atlantic Grand Prix circuit. With Canada having a large Indian population it was something I never gave any thought to, but to someone from a different area it's a legitimate question. I hope this helps explain why the name Singh was used, not confused the issue even more.

Since Ed Gareau did a review of the Observer would it not also be fair if you gave someone the opportunity to do a review of the Forum. A couple of points that Ed made should not be overlooked. The first being how Mat Results folded as there debts were to great to carry on. Anyone doing a bulletin should keep the Financial aspect of the bulletin in mind at all times. While I'm sure most would agree that they don't do it for the money, they also can't afford to lose a great deal of money on a bulletin. The other point being a lack of coverage outside of Canada, United States and Japan. This is a door wide open for someone to take advantage of. Being with a current bulletin or someone starting up a new bulletin. The opportunity is there for someone to try something new, not clone something already in place.

A note on the Memphis (CWA) show coming to FNN/SCORE. FNN is one of a select few US cable channels which Canadian cable companies are allowing to carry. However, in November the CRTC (Canada's FCC) ruled on a complaint from THE SPORTS NETWORK (TSN) that cable companies could no longer carry the SCORE portion of FNN. thus Canadians are being denied the opportunity of seeing one of the best wrestling shows on the air today. The ironic thing is that TSN carries a 90 minute Stampede show every week, also one of the best shows.

CHARLES HODGKISSON
TORONTO, ONTARIO CANADA

BULLETIN RELATIONS

The relationship between the wrestling promotions and the newsletter is like the relationship between politicians and the media. They use each other to their own perceived benefit. If you ask yourself every time a source gives you information why is he telling me this, you will be misled less often. Very few people do not have an axe to grind, especially when it concerns their livelihood. As you point out, with a readership of 200, your newsletter does not financially affect their business. You are, however, read by the competition and can be used to send them a message.

-BETSEY ANDERSON-
-Brighton, MA-

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VARIOUS THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS

I enjoyed your article "Confessions of an Ex-Manager" (Volume 3, issue 2) immensely. I never had any idea that the wrestling managers had to work with the wrestlers (e.g. doing very little while the babyface is getting heat). I guess I was under the impression that they just did their own thing. I also see the danger of the job for heel managers. Again, it was an excellent article which gave everyone a look behind the scenes that most fans never get to witness firsthand.

The Main Event angle (2/5) with two Dave Hebners is destined to go down as a classic - who would have suspected such an ending? I was disappointed that there was not time for the Hart Foundation match.

I am anxious to see a turn - it almost sounds as if McMahon is building up Bret to be the face. On Prime Time, Bobby Heenan was defending Jim Neidhart while Vince McMahon talked about Bret's endurance during the Royal Rumble.

Finally, and I'm sure you can't comment on this in the Forum, the Islanders vs Roma/Powers match in the Royal Rumble appeared to be a "shoot" on the Islanders part. I could be wrong since it is hard to tell since I was not actually there, but Haku has been known to shoot before. A while back, I noticed Brett Hart was pulling Paul Roma's hair a little too much and in a subsequent match, Roma had Hart in an armbar that appeared to be causing Bret some real pain. Since when does Bret Hart spend the whole match in a rest hold? Hart could be heard saying, "that's my arm, you know!" to Roma but not so the crowd could hear (the microphone picked it up so it was heard on TV) and Powers was standing suspiciously a ringside shouting "kill him". I know shooting doesn't happen too often because it's considered unprofessional plus the promoters frown on it, but I've seen so many of Bret Hart's matches that I can tell the difference in the way he was reacting that something was going on. To get to the point, I don't think McMahon appreciates one of his best workers being the victim of a shoot, especially by a young upstart like Roma. I thought perhaps the Royal Rumble was to teach them a lesson. I was just wondering if it was my imagination.

-NANNETTE JOHNSON-

-Watertown, NY-

EDITOR: I THINK THAT IN BOTH CASES YOU MENTION, IT WAS NOTHING MORE THAN POWERS AND ROMA BEING VERY GREEN AND OVER-ZEALOUS. THEIR TIMING IN THE ROYAL RUMBLE WAS ATROCIOUS AND THEREFORE LOOKED A LITTLE MORE LIKE A SHOOT. AS WITNESSED BY THE HTM-SAVAGE MATCH ON 2/5, VINCE WOULD NEVER HAVE A LIVE SHOOT, NO MATTER WHAT.

A SMART FAN WITH LOOSE LIPS

At a recent show, there was a smart fan sitting two rows below me and he didn't mind displaying his knowledge when prompted by other nearby fans. He did have the knowledge because he was saying things like, "Dusty runs the show, Rock and Roll quit, HTM wouldn't do a job 2/5, plus several other items I've read about in the Forum. He claims he has a relative who was married into the Crockett family and that's how he obtains some of his knowledge. So here's some of the things he was saying - take them for what they're worth...

a) When Nikita comes back, he'll turn heel and become the 4th horseman.
b) Rotundo's married to Windham's sister. c) Savage will win WMIV. d) Hogan will get eliminated in WMIV (after beating Andre) when he gets jumped by 5 or 6 wrestlers and will be unable to continue and that he will take his vacation and return 8/29 e) Jimmy Garvin and Ron Garvin are not related, even by marriage.

-FRED NAARISMA-

-Baltimore-

(11)

MEMPHIS

They may have toned down the Brother Earnest Angel thing on TV, but the live show performance of this guy is reeking with bad taste. I hate to push any kind of religious beliefs on you here, but as a Christian, his act is insulting. It's one thing to make fun of people like Jerry Falwell, Earnest Angely, or Jimmy Swaggart, but Earnest is going beyond that and is making fun of Christ. There are several in the Memphis area who are boycotting live shows until this guy is gone. There are two instances that are particularly in bad taste. Earnest carries his "good book" with him to the ring (sort of like JD Costello's rule book) and it has his name on it, but the T in Earnest is in the shape of a cross. The second incident involves a live TV interview where he is talking about TV evangelists and he says, "They're dropping like flies because they can't keep their flies shut!". That will rank right up there with Dusty's comments for our dipstick of the month award. Dave Brown and Lance Russell looked like they nearly had heart failure when he said that. The Memphis show is done LIVE on Saturday mornings and at first we thought it just got out on the live show only. But they sent the tapes out to other stations (a week later) with the segment intact and un-edited. He makes other comments over the house mike at the live shows that are pretty bad as well.

Eddie Gilbert is in in a big way. He started a feud with Jerry Lawler by hitting Jerry with a fireball. The fireball hit Jerry legit and Jerry has some nasty burns all over his face. Gilbert reportedly wanted to get the fireball over and used "a couple" of pieces of flashpaper (Cornette used about 3/4th of one when he threw his at Ron Garvin if you remember that). Flashpaper will burn and it's nasty stuff if you don't use it right. Gilbert also attacked Bill Dundee during a Dundee-Jarrett match. Dundee has left the area but this attack leaves the door open for him to return and once again team with Lawler against Eddie and probably either his dad or brother. This one will pack the place for sure.

Eddie is claiming to be the new king of Memphis wrestling and that may not be far from the truth. I understand the promotion is banking on him to carry it after Jerry Lawler finally calls it quits.

A lot of past history is being dredged up in connection with this feud. Eddie reminded the folks that when Jerry first won the Southern title back in 1973, he used a chain to take the title from his father Tommy. Jerry of course, was a heel back then.

Eddie Marlin and Tommy Gilbert are also taking their differences to the ring. Well, that's one way for a promoter to save money...climb in the ring yourself. I'm told their matches aren't that bad for a couple of old guys. Marlin and Gilbert were a tag team in the early seventies.

Other news from here...Max Paine is getting a pretty good push. He along with Gary Young hold the Southern tag belts and he by himself is the new CWA champion. Paine and Young lost their tag titles to Don and Ron Bruise (a team sponsored by the group Sawyer Brown) but won them back less than a week later. They feud presently.

Leading the Renegade Rampage with 70 points is Mas Paine. He is followed closely by his partner Young and then Manny Fernandez (who's gone), Ken Wayne (gone too) and Jeff Jarrett. The rampage concludes in June with \$250,000 in prize money available.

The Midnight Rocker (sans a manager) are now feuding with Jarrett AND Travis and they are all four working their butts off. Travis and Michaels worked a super tight match in Nashville recently and we're told that it's that way across the circuit. Could be dangerous as I understand these two aren't real fond of each other for real.

CALGARY STAMPEDE

With the Olympics and the mail from Canada being so blessed slow, we don't have a lot for you out of here this time. I'll manage to fill the page though.

See, I finally got the chance to sit down and watch the tape I got of Owen Hart matches. My mouth is still hanging open. For a kid whose only got two years of pro wrestling under his belt, there is none better. He's still got a ways to go before surpassing either a Flair or a DiBiase, but there is no doubt that he is already a top ten wrestler. One move in particular that blew me away started with a greco-roman knuckle lock. Owen kicks one hand free and with the other still locked up with his opponent, he runs toward the middle of the ropes. He jumps and lands, feet first, on the top rope. In almost the same motion he springs up in the air, kicks his legs out in front of him and lands again on the top rope with his butt. That gives him enough spring to catapult himself over backwards and take his opponent down. It was sort of like watching a gymnast work the uneven bars...without the bars. Ed Whalen said it best calling the action when he said, "There he goes!" and then shut up. He let us call the move ourselves

Still yet another Singh will come to the area, this one called Vulcan Singh. In reality he is, I believe Garry Albright who is a former collegiate wrestler from here in the states. Charles Hodgekisson has provided the answer as to why there are so many Singhs running around in Western Canada in our letters section. I've lost count.

The Hart family is reportedly very upset with Titan. Last issue we reported that they had had a falling out with them in the home territory, but now Owen made his debut at the Winston-Salem tapings (full story in the WWF report) and it was supposed to be just a tryout. We still don't know if it will make TV or not, but it was definitely taped. I don't quite know how a small promotion like this can extract revenge against a giant like Titan, but I'm sure that Stu Hart will draw on his 50+ years in the biz to come up with some way. The first step may be to quit being a farm club for them (HTM, Outback Jack, Bulldogs, and more all came from here directly to Titan).

THE NIGHT WRESTLING WENT CLASSY
PRO WRESTLING COMES TO THE FORTUNE 500
(PART ONE)

Vince Junior would've loved it. It was pro wrestling being marketed as never before. And even better yet, it was wrestling being marketed to an audience that Vince has neither the knowhow, nor the means to reach.

First, a little background information is necessary: In the "real" world, I work as the Chicago Creative Director for one of the country's top corporate communications firms. Simply put, we develop media and entertainment for Fortune 500 companies. A large percentage of our work is dedicated to creating sales meetings and all the bells and whistles that are a big part of them.

Well, in August of 1987, I began work on a project for a company that has been a client of ours for many years. We'll call them Acme Labs, changing their name here to protect the "guilty" parties. Acme was planning to hold one of their semi-annual sales meetings in Chicago in January of '88. This would be a particularly important meeting as a major new product was going to be introduced.

As was the case with all Acme meetings, their agenda included a special evening of entertainment for the Acme sales force. This time, however, the powers-that-be at Acme gave us the following marching order: they wanted "something different" -- something that "hadn't been done before". It seems they had grown tired of singers, dancers, comedians, and what we call in the business "theme parties" (an indoor beach party or a '50s night, for example).

We had two weeks to put together a "proposal" for Acme. As is usually the case, we would be bidding against three other communication companies.

As the Creative Director for our company, it's my responsibility to develop the creative concepts for our proposals -- for the meeting portions as well as the entertainment.

As I turned my attention to the entertainment portion, I began to think about the make-up of Acme's sales force. They were young, extremely high-energy, and big income earners -- in short, classic yuppies. They loved to scream and yell -- I'd seen it at previous Acme meetings I'd attended. And one of the favorite pastimes was knocking the competition -- they took great joy in ripping the competition to shreds, figuratively that is.

I hadn't been thinking about this project long when "The Idea" first came to me. I quickly dismissed it, admonishing myself for such a silly thought.

Ignoring it didn't work. "The Idea" returned. And worse yet, I began to like "The Idea".

It persisted. Now, I began to ask myself more important questions: Could I get away with it? Was I just kidding myself??? Professional wrestling as part of a corporate gathering? Perhaps I had indeed written one too many World Class reports.

Such was not the case. And shortly thereafter, "A.D.D. WrestleRock" was born (A.D.D. standing for "Acme Diagnostics Division").

"A.D.D. WrestleRock", I decided, would be unlike any wrestling show ever promoted (actually, this wouldn't be too difficult considering that customized pro wrestling had never appeared as part of a Fortune 500 company's sales meeting before).

We'd spare no expense. More importantly, we'd customize the entire affair -- custom wrestling wear, custom ring names, custom banners and programs -- the whole nine yards!

Immediately, the rest of the project team got excited about "A.D.D. WrestleRock". It was indeed something different. It was something exciting, and as I began to put the proposal for the show together, the

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wrestling fans in the office began to come out of their closets.

There was a lot to do. First, I conducted an informal poll to determine what wrestling promotion I wanted to work with should we win the bid and get the job. I talked to Jon, Dave Meltzer, and a number of others before narrowing the list down to two: Jerry Lawler's Memphis gang and Eddie Sharkey's Pro Wrestling America group.

Several phone calls later, my decision was final. We'd work with the PWA. The primary reason? Ray Wiebe. Ray provided me with tremendous help in the early stages of the project, spending a couple of hours with me on the phone designing something that was completely new to both of us. There was, of course, no precedent to base it on.

We talked long and hard about how "A.D.D. WrestleRock" would work, what wrestlers we'd use, and most important, how we'd "marry pro wrestling to the corporate world -- two more different animals you'd be hardpressed to find.

Things began to fall into place: There would be two matches -- a singles match for the "Diagnostics Heavyweight Championship of the World" and a special tag team grudge match...The faces would wear trunks that displayed Acme's logo, while the heels would sport the competition's...Ring names would also be created to reinforce the "battle" between Acme and its competitors....Wrestlers would be briefed on Acme-related words and phrases that could be used to draw tremendous heat from the crowd...."A.D.D. WrestleRock" banners would be produced for all sides of the ring apron...A slick, original program would be designed and printed....A lighting package for the ring would be designed rivaling that of a Titan television taping...A rock band -- one of the Midwest's best -- was chosen for the "Rock" portion of "A.D.D. WrestleRock".

In short, no stone was left unturned.

It paid off. In early September, Acme awarded us the meeting. After the initial shock of professional wrestling (egad!!!) had worn off, Acme told us they had become enamored with this unique, exciting, original idea. It was just right for their sales force, they said -- "crazy enough to bring the house down". In fact, they began to like it so much after our initial presentation that it became a key factor in awarding us the entire meeting -- product introduction and all. I was feeling awfully good.

With the project now ours, it was time for work to begin.

First up was an early November trip to Minneapolis to "scout" the PWA. A mid-week show at George's Bar in Fridley gave me the opportunity to see some of the PWA's best. Ray and I decided on the criteria we'd use to select our six-man roster:

- 1) They had to be excellent workers. My guess was that better than 90% of our audience in January were going to be pure, unadulterated marks. Ten percent, at best, were casual wrestling fans. In order to get them to pop, the action would need to be fast and furious. No Junkfood Dogs on our show.
- 2) They had to have "smarts". They'd have to be able to understand the significance of this project and this very unique situation. This was a million dollar sales meeting (the entire project, not "A.D.D. WrestleRock", that is), and some of America's top execs would be there. A spot show at the Civic Center this wasn't.
- 3) They couldn't be troublemakers. No drugs, no bullies. The last thing I needed was someone shorting up in the bathroom or starting a fight in the hotel bar with an Acme salesman who had one too many. There was too much on the line (my job, for instance).

- 4) The heels had to look menacing and the faces had to be extremely good-looking (better than 30% of our audience would be women). We'd have to vividly portray the forces of good and evil through the wrestlers' appearances. After all, there would be no prior TV shot or angles set up to hype this card.

The crew came together nicely. Derrick Dukes, a young black up-and-comer capable of some amazing high spots... Larry Cameron, a seasoned veteran of better-than-average size with an uncanny ability for working a crowd... Johnny Love, a relatively small yet highly charismatic rock-and-roller... The Terminators, Dan Rignoti and Doug Fisher, an awesome looking tag team ready to strike fear in the heart of any mark... and, fresh off his WWF departure, Tom Zenk.

I returned to Chicago and began to assign "roles" to each of the wrestlers. Having done that, ordering the wrestling wear was next. For that, I turned to K & H Wrestling Wear, arguably the number one source for ring-wear in the country. "We do many of the top stars in the country," my contact at K & H told me, "We did Bam Bam's flames and Honky Tonk's guitars". Good enough for me.

The pace began to pick up. Our Art Department developed the "WrestleRock" logo... The "A.D.D. WrestleRock" program was designed... Room decorations for the Grand Ballroom of Chicago's Marriot Hotel -- the venue for "A.D.D. WrestleRock"--was decided upon... Entrance music for each wrestler was selected and recorded... I contacted Jon about making his managerial debut in our main event. He thought about it for a while, and two seconds later, accepted the offer.

In mid-January we hit our first snag. Verne had signed Zenk and expressly forbid him from working on any independent show even remotely connected with Eddie Sharkey. Ray and I decided it was fruitless to attempt to explain to Verne what this was all about; he has enough trouble understanding his own business. We acted quickly, substituting Ricky Rice, the former PWA champion who had recently started working in the AWA. Ricky was also about the same size as Zenk; he'd have no trouble wearing the trunks and robe we'd had custom made for Zenk. We'd lucked out.

It was now one week before the show. (Actually, we were going to be doing two shows -- one on Monday night for half the Acme sales force -- about 400 people -- and the other on Thursday night for the other half -- about 500 attendees. The wrestlers would have the rest of the week to do as they pleased)... "Cheat sheets" went out to each wrestler. Each sheet included a description of that wrestler's "character" along with the words and phrases they'd be expected to use to work the crowd... Next, expense checks went out. Suffice it to say that the expense checks alone were more than many wrestlers in the country make in a week... Airline tickets followed. The crew would arrive in Chicago on Sunday night, January 24. I'd meet them at the hotel, and we'd go from there.

Only one consideration remained. We needed a ring announcer. Could I? Should I??? Of course I could... and should. After all, I might as well play the fantasy out to its fullest.

NEXT ISSUE: SHOW WEEK

GLOBAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE
by Jeff Bowdren

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This will be our first report on Global Wrestling Alliance (hereafter referred to as the GWA) and like all first reports, we will first introduce you to the wrestler in the promotion. The promotion seems to have about four guys who run the show behind the scenes. Those four are Dr. Red Roberts (Mike Brannon), Bob Roop, Rusty Brooks, and Boris Malenko. I think that Roberts is the guy who sets up the angles and acts as booker.

Lead heels for the promotion are Roberts, the tag team of Brooks and Jumbo Baretta, former CWF jobber Steve "the Party Animal" Collins who comes to the ring with two attractive young ladies who are called the "Party Girls". Other heels include the team of "Death Row" who are two big black guys billed as being from "Raiford, FL". For those of you not familiar with the Sunshine State, Raiford is where the maximum security prison is. The two are managed by Roberts, and come out wearing prison uniforms and handcuffed together. On their backs are the numbers "3260" and "2633" of which Roberts says, "Society has been so prejudiced against them that they wouldn't even give them name." They then go in and destroy whoever they wrestle. The other heels are "V. C. Mim", who is billed as being from North Viet Nam, but who is actually Masami Soranaka. Soranaka is a veteran of the legendary UWF from Japan and is also Carl Gotch's son in law (Gotch may have been the greatest shooter in the history of the business and is the man who trained most of the UWF guys like Akira Maeda, and Nobuhiko Takada).

On the babyface side, lead face is the recently promoted Colonel Kirschner, he of the super-intense, gonna-have-a-coronary-if-I-keep-this-up interview. His partner is "G. I. Joe Palardi", who along with Kirschner are billed as being former Viet Nam Vets (Kirschner would have been fourteen years old when the war ended, but I guess some guys love their country so much they'll pay for their own airfare to the combat zone). Other faces include the combination of the soul Patrol, which consist of TJ Jackson, Johnny "Ram-man" Evans and "soulman" Alex Gee, who is really small (maybe 5' 7 160 pounds) but for some reason his is really over with the little kids. Others include The Malenko Brothers, Jody and dean, who have been faces, but who I believe will be making a heel turn. Both are superior technical wrestlers who were trained by Carl Gotch and recently completed a tour of Japan. They both are also, along with their father, instructors at the Malenko school of wrestling, whose graduates include Chris Champion, and Jack Hart/Barry Horowitz, so you know they pride themselves on producing good workers.

Taking a look at feuds going on with the Promotion, the main one is Red Roberts and VC Mim taking on Kirschner and polardi. Kirschner claims that Roberts has brought Mim in as a way of psyching him out, and in a recent TV match, Mim appeared at ringside, and showed a photo of "GI's going home in body bags", which of course caused Polardi and Kirschner to have flashbacks of the horrors of war. Roberts, who does sort of a psychologist gimmick, claims that Kirschner and polardi are "your typical, psycho Viet Nam Vets". In Kirschner's case, truth may be stranger than fiction, as the good folks in Calgary can tell you. This week on TV, Roberts had the baker Act invoked on Kirschner which prevented him from wrestling (the baker Act is when someone is declared mentally incompetent). This is an angle that I don't think even Memphis has tried yet and it's pretty good. Their feud continues.

Other feuds include Brooks and Baretta (GWA tag champs) against Jackson and Evans. Considering the size of the four guys, their matches really aren't too bad and Brooks does a good job of getting heat at ringside. Alex Gee is feuding over the GWA Jr. Heavyweight title (the promotion does not recognize a heavyweight champ) with the Party Animal, Steve Collins. Best workers on the circuit are Collins, the Malenkos, Scotty Willimas (former CWF jobber). The Malenkos wrestling school is headquartered in Tampa and the GWA school is in Fort Lauderdale

and instructors are Roberts and Brooks. Among the most promising grads are Tom "the Punisher" Nash, who for a guy who has only about ten matches under his belt, uses an incredible amount of moves. In one match I saw, he did a Randy Savage leap from the top rope to the floor, Harley Race's move of bobbing up and down on the middle rope when being hit, and Ric Flair's move of the flip into the corner, and finally a variation of Hiro Hase's spectacular "Northern Lights Suplex" which if you've seen just has to be the greatest move in wrestling today. His wrestling style is patterned after his idol Owen Hart. Not a bad choice of someone to pattern yourself after. This is one guy you'd better watch out for.

Other promising grads include Lou Perez (cousin of Al Perez) who is a good looking tall guy and will probably end up with a push as a result.

Well, that's our first look at the GWA. Our reports will be coming each issue about this promotion which is similar to the old CWF (Championship Wrestling from Florida) back in the seventies. They do a lot of interesting angles which I saw at a recent TV taping, and with time, could become a lot of fun to watch.

3-11-88 PLANTATION, FL

Tom Nash over Dave Heath with a Russian Leg sweep (Brad Armstrong move-see what I mean about this guy?). Scotty Williams used the ropes to win over Ricky Fronton (Fronton has one of the most massive shests I've ever seen). Death Row won a Texas Tornado handicap match over the team of Mauler Mays, Dave Sierra (not the Cuban Assassin Dave Sierra), and Rotton Ron. Steve Collins went to a fifteen minute draw with Alex Gee. Brooks and Baretta got a win over Evans and Jackson when Rusty hit Evans over the head with a tag belt and Baretta pinned him. In the finale, Roberts and Kirschner went to a double count out in a chain match that saw double juice and a battle royal at the end when all the guys on the card came out to break it up. Roberts and Kirschner went out into the crowd during the match and the chairs started flying.

NOTES: Crowd was about 150 which was disappointing to say the least....with a crowd that size, why take the final match into the crowd and risk a lawsuit?....Nash also did an old Ardan Adonis move when he catches himself between the top and middle rope and hangs himself....Party girls weren't at the matches much to the dismay of this writer....

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UNITED ASSOCIATION OF WRESTLING FANS  
Box 215  
GALESBURG, IL 61402

Just to quickly update you on the organization, the first magazine should be out by the end of the first week of April. Deadline for all classified ads (\$1.25 each ad) is 3-29. Anyone who would like to be listed with the video exchange (trading video tapes only...no sales) should also have the information to the above address no later than that date as well. There is no charge for being listed in the video exchange.

Also, when you recruit a new member for the group, be sure to have them mention your name so you can receive credit. The first edition of the magazine will also include a ballot for electing retired wrestlers to the RING OF IMMORTALS. If you haven't joined, now's the time! Fifteen dollars for a single membership and just \$2.00 extra for each additional family member.

## WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

Surprisingly, Wrestlemania news is not the only thing happening here. There has been a rash of departures so let's get to that now.

First off, the Iron Sheik returned for just a couple of weeks before getting the axe. The reason for his departure so soon can only be speculated on, but odds are that what you are thinking is correct.

Also gone from the announcing booth is Bruno Sammartino. There are several contributing factors here, but the main reason appears to be that Bruno wanted more air time as well as the chance to do some serious commentary. The only problem was that Vince and Jesse found Bruno to be such a great straight man to level their sarcastic comments at that Bruno just couldn't be taken seriously. Half of what Jesse said to Bruno was a semi shoot and when Bruno made his thoughts known to Vince (on wanting things changed) they couldn't come to an agreement.

Meanwhile, last Wednesday night in Watertown NY, David Sammartino managed to make his departure memorable by attacking a fan at ringside. According to an Associated press story, Martin Gallagher (no relation to me) was heckling Sammartino from his ringside seat when Sammartino came into the crowd and punched and kicked him. Mr. Gallagher is now a full fledged believer in wrestling and WWF spokesman Basil DeVito said that Sammartino's contract was immediately terminated. "Furthermore," said DeVito, "The World Wrestling Federation is fully cooperating with all parties and agencies to ensure that this situation is brought to a swift and satisfactory conclusion. (We) are shocked and appalled at what transpired." There was no word as to whether charges would be filed against Sammartino or not. I hate to tell David this, but he got the wrong Gallagher.

News from Winston-Salem, NC where the latest edition of the Superstars was taped (air dates this weekend, Wrestlemania weekend, and the weekend after WMIV). There was no commentary done live for the third hour which assures that they don't want any mistakes in case something goes wrong at WMIV. There were two main things that took place.

The first sets up an angle for March 27. Criag DeGeorge is interviewing DiBiase and Andre when Jim Duggan comes to the podium to tell DiBiase what he's going to do to him in the first round. Andre grabs him from behind and headbutts him. This happened at the end of the second hour. At the beginning of the third hour, Andre is to wrestle a jobber (note: he appeared without the belt so it ain't him). Duggan came out again and Andre had him in a choke hold. Somehow, Duggan reached down and grabbed his 2 x 4 and clobbered Andre with it and it knocked Andre out. Duggan then stomped around the ring giving his thumbs up sign while Andre was laid out in the ring. Duggan left and "doctors" and WWF officials came out to carry Andre back. Turns out that Andre had just gone to sleep or something and he started tossing refs and doctors out of the ring at will. He finished up by chasing Pat Patterson back to the dressing room. A new feud perhaps between Duggan and Andre? Dunno.

The second thing of significance was the appearance of Owen Hart. Now this match was not scheduled to be taped for TV but the cameras were rolling. Owen submitted to a Hercules Hernandez backbreaker (Luger style) and it may not have been prearranged that way. I understand that the Calgary people are furious about the incident and that Owen is not real happy as well. Hercules had him up for about 10 seconds before the ref called for the bell. Owen reportedly missed a few moves at first (Herc's fault) but once he picked up the pace, he was excellent.

One way that Vince will be getting even with Crockett for the free show on TBS is with an all out talent raid. At least that's what the wrestlers have been saying. From what I've heard, not a lot are happy with that decision as it means more wrestlers will be getting more of

of a push...that is, they will have to divide the pushes up to get it all in to TV time. With that, it means less TV time for the established corps. Vince may have big plans but they may backfire in his face.

Okay, it's prediction time. I've held off on Wrestlemania speculation until I soaked in what the WWF was putting out and what you all were thinking. I'll go with Randy Savage as the new WWF champion. Here's my reasoning.

They changed the bracketing of the tournament so that it could come down to a showdown between DiBiase and Savage. Originally it was set up so they would have had to meet in the semi finals. Now my reasoning for Savage instead of DiBiase is this: Every big event that Titan has had ends with Hulk Hogan posing. He's not going to win this thing so there has to be a way for him to be there at the end to do his posing. If DiBiase wins, that will be the climactic point and it wouldn't look good for Hogan to do a run in. However, DiBiase will have both Virgil and Andre at ringside for him so (especially with the latest Saturday night's Main Event angle) it would only make sense for Hogan to be at ringside as well to offset the odds. When Savage wins, Hogan can pose though his posing will steal Savages' heat.

Saturday Night's Main Event was held on 3/7 with the airing on 3/12. The card itself was not all that impressive, but they again used the program to set angles and hype 3/27. Hogan beat Harley Race in a match that was pretty decent mainly due to Harley. They did a fantastic bump with Race setting up Hogan on a ringside table while Harley went to the ring apron to do a falling headbutt. Hogan moved, and Race broke the table in half. It got a C+ from me.

Next up was Savage and DiBiase. DiBiase won on a count out after the referee took a bump. Andre came over while the ref was down and pretty well destroyed Randy. Liz left the ringside area and came back with a chair toting Hogan who cleared the ring. He helped Randy out of the ring at the end and this is most of the reason I base my prediction for the new champion. Match got a B.

Other matches on the card was OMG pin Ken Patera, the Islanders beat the Killer Bees. It took place as a 2 of 3 falls match in person but was shown as a one fall on TV (they showed the last fall). Also, Brutus Beefcake beat Greg Valentine with the Richter-Moolah finish (double pin with Brutus lifting his shoulder at the three count). Brutus snipped off a little bit of Greg's hair. All of these matches were in the C-range with OMG-Patera being maybe a little lower.

Add Glady's Knight and the Pips to the WMIV celebrity line up. They will open the show with the singing of either the national anthem or America the Beautiful.

One of the announcers they've interviewed for the open position is Chicagoan Chet Koppick. Koppick does Chicago Sting soccer games and used to do Midwest Pioneer roller derby as well. He turned down the job as a solid offer had been made. It would have been interesting to see him doing interviews with the wrestlers as Koppick is a legit 6'8". Can you imagine him standing next to Andre? "Here's the world's tallest wrestling announcer at 7'4½..." If they do manage to fill the position, I can imagine that Craig DeGeorge will be looking for another line of work. Hey...I wonder if Mark Lowrance has sent a tape yet?

Now some more WMIV speculation. You'll remember that Honky Tonk Man had been scheduled to lose his intercontinental title to Randy Savage during the 2/5 Main Event but refused to do the job. Well, we at that time speculated just how Vince would "punish" him for his insubordination. I think it has been decided how. I've heard from a pretty reliable source that Honky Tonk went to Vince and said something to the effect of, "Hey look, I'm sorry about that night in Indianapolis. Look, I've figured out how you can pay me back. Take my hair at Wrestlemania!" That seems to be the way the thing is building as we head into the final week or so. Honky gets a pretty good deal out of it by not getting hurt somewhere down the line, plus he wouldn't have to lose the IC title to Beefcake if he lost his hair (sleeper after the match or some such nonsense). Since they take a month off after WMIV, that gives the hair quite a head start on growing back and while it does they can always use the wig routine where everyone tries to pull it off. Personally, I'm not real excited about this whole senario, but it would work.

If you've got a tape of the last SNME, go back and watch Hogan's leg drop. You'll be able to tell where they cut the tape if you watch real close. Hogan went for one leg drop and it didn't come off, so he did a second. The magicians in the editing department made it come off as jus one almost perfect move.

Here's one for the "Sure, Muskrat!" category...Randy Savage has had a suit filed against him out in Pennsylvania for attacking a fan. But wait till you hear the guy's story! He alleges that on May 7, 1986, Savage (who he claims is 6' 4" and 280 pounds) attacked this guy after he asked for an autograph. Quoting from a story in the Morning Call newspaper, "According to Peschel's complaint, he had attended a pro wrestling match featuring Savage on May 7, 1986, at Agricultural Hall in Allentown (PA). Savage, whose picture was on the cover of the program, was at the time the holder of the WWF's intercontinental Championship. He had won that title from Tito Santana at the Boston Garden 'after striking Tito Santana's head with a blatantly illegal blow utilizing a hidden weapon,' the suit says. Peschel, who is about 20 years old was driving home along route 22 when he spotted Savage, driving east in a blue Mercedes Benz. Savage was accompanied by his wife and manager, 'Miss Elizabeth' and a six foot tall, 350-pound bodyguard. Savage exited at 13th street in Easton and Peschel followed. Savage stopped for a red light and Peschel motioned for him to autograph his program, then got out of his car and approached Savage's. Savage, Elizabeth and the bodyguard all got out of the Mercedes and Peschel politely asked the wrestler for an autograph, the suit says. In response, Savage struck Peschel in the face, then lifted him above his head and threw him to the ground in a body slam."

Now realize that Randy Savage is one of the cheapest so-and-sos in the business today. When he rents cars, it always either a Chevette or whatever else is cheap. I can't believe that they actually list a match 9th the IC title change) in the suit. All I can say is that I hope the judge in this case is wearing hip boots, cos when this joker testifies in court 9th the fan, that is) it's gonna get deep. My thanks to Gary Howerter of Emmaus, PA for supplying the newspaper clipping and hopefully he will keep us posted on what happens.

Jeff Archey reports that they had a new guy doing some commentary at the SNME taping. If you attend a taping and see something like this, this is the WWF giving a prospective announcer a tryout with live matches. No idea who this one was, but they've been doing this quite a bit at the live shows where they do tapings.

### THE THIRD FALL

It seems that some bookers are always able to come up with new and fresh angles, week after week. But in most cases, these new angles are often nothing more than a reworking of one from a few years past. Sometimes there will be a new twist or an interesting turn added to update things, but still, most are things we've seen before.

Witness the case of one Mort Henderson. Mort worked as a railroad guard in Altona, Pennsylvania during the day, but was interested in wrestling. At 215 pounds and a natural athlete, a local promoter thought he could help Mort make his dream come true. The skit to introduce Mort was thought out and finally put into action.

Mort's role was simple. All he had to do was sit in the audience. Most people could handle that assignment. He was placed in the audience conspicuously enough that other fans would know that he wasn't "just another fan."

Night after night, Mort would sit there silently. He never showed emotion by cheering or booing. He just sat there. Until the opportune moment.

That moment came after a title defense by the champion. Mort came to the ring and issued a challenge to the champ. The crowd, who had suspected that Mort was something more than what he seemed, echoed their approval.

But the champ balked. Mort had not earned a title shot by just sitting in the audience night after night. He would have to prove himself against a host of top challengers.

And prove himself he did. Mort began wrestling and night after night, he walked through his competition in nothing flat. Attendance doubled. And then doubled again anticipating Mort's certain match with the champion and a title change.

Now you've seen this same angle done several times. Fans of the AWA will remember that this is the way that Dr. X was introduced to fans. The WWF used a similar situation when introducing Hillbilly Jim. But they continued to wrestle long after the gimmick ran its original course.

Mort never wrestled again after the culmination of his feud with the champion.

We should mention that Mort was wrestling under an alias. He also worked under a mask.

In his match with champ Strangler Lewis, unmasked the Masked Mervel as Mort Henderson. Mort then went back to being a railroad guard, and Strangler continued to tour the country as champ.

So if you thought the "fan in the stands" was a novel approach, think again. The angle we've just described between the Masked Marvel and champion Strangler Lewis took place in 1915. Some 70 years before Hillbilly Jim.

Now you know where the idea originated because now you know the outcome of the third fall.

PULSE ON PORTLAND  
BY GREG ANDERSON

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First thing to report this time out is that Rip Oliver stays and Brian Adams goes as Rip pinned Adams on 2/20 in their loser-leave-town match. I guess this means we'll believe that Oliver is going to Titan when we see it. Why Oliver insists on making subpar wages in a regional promotion is a mystery. I guess his ego can't handle doing jobs. Or perhaps with Billy Jack Haynes leaving the WWF under less-than-friendly circumstances, Vinnie doesn't wish to look any of his friends.

The only highlight from the 2/27 show is the finish to the Grappler's Northwest title defense against Mike Miller and there ain't much to report there either. Miller had Grappler on the road to defeat when the two newestmasked men in the area, Destroyers #1 & 2, ran in to attack Miller and this they did until Coco Samoa and Billy two Eagles ran in for the save. Miller wins via dq. and Grappler retains his title. After the bout, Barry Owen announced that the Destroyers would each be fined \$500. My, there goes a month's pay for these guys.

In a major bit of news that could have a resounding impact on Owen promotions, Billy Jack Haynes has received a promoter's license and has formed the Oregon Wrestling Federation to combat Don and Barry! Haynes' territory will cover the entire state. It will run six nights a week and Billy, of course, will be lead babyface. Rumors have Buddy Rose, Ed Wiskoski and Brady Boone as a part of this new group. Haynes has also reportedly approached Tom Zenk to work for him. Funny thing is Zenk was also announced as a possibility for appearances in Owen-land in the Spring! This could be one of the nastiest promotional wars in recent memory. It will also be interesting to see if Haynes will get any of Don's boys to defect (I think Oliver is a strong possibility as their popular feud could be carried over to the new promotion).

To update you a bit on the 2/16 Frank Bonnaema Memorial show, the card drew a disappointing 600 fans. For a card as loaded as this one was, I was amazed by this. Grappler actually pinned Curt Hennig after the loaded kick and Assassin headbutted Grappler after the fall was scored. The first Destroyer who "debuted" on the card is actually Joey Jackson in a mask and body suit. We still don't know who Destroyer #2 is.

In Rip Oliver's defense, I must report that Brian Adams lost the loser-leave-town match because he was headed to New Japan to work for Inoki (who trained Adams) as the Midnight Soldier.

The remainder of this report will be a review of a program on pro wrestling seen on the ABC affiliate in Portland. "Town Hall" is a local Donahue-type public forum show and on 2/28 Billy Jack Haynes was the featured guest with other current and past pro grapplers also on hand. The major thrust of the program was the real vs. fake issue and at one point resembled the infamous Jeff Blatnik-Lou Albano debate from last year. In attendance were a couple of amateur wrestlers who lamented that pro wrestling was not an extension of the amateur sport, as pro football, basketball, boxing, etc. are. Haynes suggested that maybe they were a bit jealous that amateur wrestlers compete in front of 2,000 fans and the pros perform in front of 12,000. One of the amateurs admitted that he might be but when a 280 lb. man comes off the top rope onto his opponent and the recipient gets up and walks away, something's fishy. Retired pro tough Tony Borne went into a heel interview-type tirade about how there was nothing phoney about him and talked about his son Matt's athletic ability. The amateurs were also concerned that many people confuse pro wrestling with amateur wrestling and this was hurting the sport at the high school and collegiate levels (give me a break).

There were a couple of psychologists expounding on what makes someone a fan of pro wrestling. Reasons cited were hero worship, getting away from the everyday world and the clearly defined good vs. evil morality play.

Haynes' new promotion was touched upon briefly. Billy was calling it the Oregon-Washington Wrestling Federation and said it would be based out of Oregon City and would open in a month-and-a-half at a newly renovated skating rink-turned-sports-arena. Brad Reinghens was also there and a training camp was also talked about (can we put two and two together here?) Owen employee Mike Miller was also present and was friendly toward Haynes (will Mike jump?) On a humorous note, when Oregon commissioner Anderson was asked about blading, he answered, "I've never seen it and I don't allow it." Anderson banned the practice when he took over late last year. A lady in the audience asked why the wrestlers wore tape around their wrists and fingers, and Haynes replied it was due to injuries.

#### WORLD CLASS

Two stories of major note here this time, the first being the Kerry Von Erich has taken the WCCW title from Al Perez. He won the title on 3/6 in Dallas. This was somewhat of a surprise (not that he won it because that was pretty much a given once he made his comeback), but he had not been scheduled against Perez that particular night. The angle that set up this bout is the second big story.

Michael Hayes was the original opponent set for the card. But Hayes made his concert debut in the World Class area on 3/4. Hayes did the concert and dedicated the finale to David Von Erich at which time he invited the Von Erich family on stage with him. Iceman and Buddy Roberts both come out to express their reservations about Hayes apparent change of heart and a bit of a brawl breaks out. Roberts grabbed one of the guitars on stage (no doubt one of HIM's breakaway versions) and swings it at Kerry. Kerry ducked and Buddy hits Hayes instead, resulting in Michael's injury and also in him having to give up his title shot against Perez. What this comes out to is this: Michael normally would have forgiven Buddy, but since Kerry was able to win the belt, Michael will be able to say that Buddy cost him the title. Terry Gordy was due back this week and the hot angle here will be who he decides to side with. Something tells me that it's going to be Buddy and Iceman.

Mantell is keeping things hot around here with a rash of title changes recently. I don't have a full list, but basically every major title has changed hands in the past month or so. I do know that Terry Taylor won the Texas championship at the end of February by defeating Matt Forne (at least that's the last person I had heard who had the title).

Last issue we mentioned that Mantell was trying to work out a deal that would have sent Kerry and Kevin to the Crockett Cup in exchange for Flair defending his NWA title against Kerry on the next David/Mike Von Erich memorial parade of champions. I have heard that negotiations were proceeding nicely, but egos eventually got in the way, and they have pretty well dropped the idea.

Mark Lowrance keeps coming up with some of the stupidest lines in the biz. Recently, he was talking about the matches they've been having where the loser gets handcuffed to the ropes while his tag team partners continue to wrestle. Mark was asked how he would like to wrestle Kerry with one hand handcuffed and Mark replied, "I wouldn't want to wrestle him with both my hands handcuffed!" Does this guy REALLY GET PAID TO DO WHAT HE DOES?

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## RESULTS FROM ALL OVER

2-26 BALTIMORE (WWF) - COURTESY OF FRED NAARISMA... Iron Mike Sharpe over OULback Jack... Iron Sheik pinned Ken Paterson... Danny Davis beat Sam Houston... Koko beat Badnews Brown via COR... Bigelow pinned Iron Sheik... Hercules went to a double count out with Ron Muraco... Peefcake pinned Greg Valentine... Islanders over Bulldogs by DQ...  
NOTES: Sheik pinned Paterson using the ropes in the corner... Davis used a foreign object... Badnews had a near three count on him and argued with the referee... he ended up just walking out and back to the dressing room and was counted out... One Man Gang was a no show and Iron Sheik had to sub in the main event... Herc and Rock was a "horrible match" with a lot of long distance threats and rest holds... Titan doesn't return to Baltimore until 6/25, a four month layoff.

3-3 KANSAS CITY (WWA) - COURTESY OF BRUCE GRUMMERT... Power Twins defeated Joe Lightfoot/Chief Tapu... Karate kid beat Gorilla Cruz in a midjet boxing match (KO round 5)... Ken Timbs over Curtis Hughes... Cuban Assassin/Rob Brown DCOR Steve Ray/Ric Paterson... Masa Chono beat Mike George by DQ... NOTES: Attendance 400... Rufus R Jones retiring from wrestling and Curtis Hughes is his protege... he jumped in ring to help Curtis against Timbs... Eddie Gilbert was scheduled but had a problem with a connecting flight in Chicago (surrre. Blame the airlines).

3-4 PITTSBURGH (NWA) - COURTESY OF JEFF LYNCH... Green machine pinned Italian Stallion... Jimmy Valiant over Jerry Jackson... Chris Champion beat Shaska Whatley... Ivan Koloff drew Ricky Santana... Lightening Express beat Shepherders... Ole Anderson/Lex Luger defeated Tully Blanchard/Arn Anderson... Road Warriors beat Barbarian/Karl Lord... NOTES: Green machine is Buggy McGraw under a hood... Champion was moving in slo-mo... the twenty minute draw went an actual 14:00... fast clock I guess... Warriors match was a lumberjack and the end came when Animal pinned Ivan Koloff who was one of the lumberjacks... Jerry Jackson is the same guy as Jimmy Jackson, a Pittsburgh local... he uses the name Jerry when he's a heel and Jimmy when he's a face.

3-4 ST LOUIS (IND) - COURTESY OF HARRY WHITE... Spike Huber pinned Steve Regal... Nord the Barbarian beat Ron Powers... midjet match... Fantastics pinned the Firewalkers... Chris Adams beat Kimala by DQ... Brody beat Blackwell by DQ... NOTES: attendance: 800... card held at the fabulous Fox Theatre... next up will be Tractor pulls at the Metropolitan Opera House... Brody took a false three count after Blackwell threw him over the top ropes and powerslammed him... another ref from the back came in and called for the over the top rope DQ... Brody gave a talk on pro wrestling before the matches.

3-5 BOSTON (WWF) - COURTESY OF JOE COUGHLIN... Steve Lombardi over SD Jones (bad)... Davis beat Houston (bad)... Demolition over Rougeau Brothers... Jake Roberts beat Ron Bass via COR (awful)... JB Angels beat Glamour Ghouls... Ultimate Dingbat beat Race... Dino Bravo downed David Sammartino (another bomb)... Strike Force/Savage beat Hart Foundation/HTM in a cage... NOTES: Attendance: 4500 (?)... Angels were only bright spot on the card but the Ghouls weren't interested in the match or making them look good... Iron Sheik gone already... Demolition got lots of cheers and Rougeaus were booed noticeably... not a good card.



2-26 ROSLINDALE, MA (IND) - COURTESY OF SCOTT DICKINSON...  
 Great Scott pinned the Rebel...Scott Seward beat Hillbilly Tom...Eric  
 Tombstone beat bull Montana...Jamie West over Betty Blackfeather...  
 Eric Shracia defeated Prime Time Paul Zine...Rocky Raymond/Great Scott  
 beat Ted Arcidi/Lucious Joey G...Dundeon Master went to a no contest  
 with Russian Hammer...Richard Byrne downed Irash Pat Sullivan Jr....  
 NOTES: Scott made his refereeing debut here doing matches one and three...  
 Montana got his head shaved after his bout by Dungeon Master...Master  
 adn Hammer was a chain match with Arcidi as ref...Arcidi turned on Master.

3-6 ST LOUIS (NWA) - COURTESY OF HARRY WHITE...Kendall pinned  
 Johnny Ace...Shane Douglas over Mr. Missouri...Steiner and Santana went  
 to a 20 minute draw...Lightening Express defeated the Shepherders...Rhodes  
 won by DQ over Rotunda...Luger and Windham beat Tully and Arn by DQ...  
 Flair pinned Sting...NOTES: attendance: 5800...Steiner and Santana  
 had a great brawl inside and out of the ring...Horner and Armstrong  
 won but got clobbered by the flagpole afterwards...Sullivan came in  
 and choked Rhodes with a coat hanger for the DQ...Dusty was deep red...  
 JJ hit Sting with shoe...Flair bladed...crowd hot for every match.

3-10 BALTIMORE (NWA) - COURTESY OF FRED NAARISMA...Ricky  
 Santana pinned Gary Royal...Steiner over Kendall Windham...Shane Douglas  
 beat black Bart...Mike Rotunda drew Jimmy Garvin...Luger/Windham over  
 Tully/Arn vis DQ...Warriors defeated Warlord/Barbarian...Sting beat  
 Flair by DQ...NOTES: Attendance: 6000...Steiner was announced as Florida  
 Champion but wore no belt...Skandor Akbar was at ringside with Bart...  
 Lex at one point pressed Tully above his head and the crowd went nuts...  
 Lex did a 360 with Tully in that position soaking in the cheers...Warriors  
 won their match when Ellering climbed the ladder to get the bag of money  
 ("\$50,000") after knocking Jones off the ladder...match only went about  
 4:00...Sting over a lot...JJ used shoe on Sting while Sting had Flair  
 in the scorpion (after a ref bump)...DQ was for flipping Sting over  
 the top rope.

3-11 ST. JOSEPHS, MO (WWA) - COURTESY OF BRUCE GRUMMERT...  
 TC Carter drew Joe Lightfoot...Hughes beat Larry Power...Dave Peterson  
 beat David Powers...Midget boxing, Little Coco beat Little Tokyo in  
 round 5...Jones beat timbs via DQ...Assassin/Brown beat Ray/Paterson...  
 Peterson beat Masa Chono (non title)...NOTES: Attendance 540...Carter-  
 Lightfoot a real dud...crowd went to sleep...Bob Brown is drawing tons  
 of heat from the audience, but one of these days is going to go too  
 far with what he does...he spent quite a bit of time threatening fans  
 with either his fist or a chair...Mike George suffered a deep cut in  
 another town and had to have 25 stitohes so he missed the title match  
 with Chono...

#### wrestlemania update

Geez...am I starting to sound like Craig DeGeorge? Anyway, we're going  
 to watch WMIV here on the delayed basis (7:00 pm 3-27) and catch Crockett's  
 show live rather than try to figure out some complicated way of taping  
 both shows at once (and run the chance of missing one or both). I'll  
 be checking in with my staff immediately after the second showing for  
 their grades and will not answer the phone during that time. Your calls  
 are welcome and comments appreciated after we get that out of the way  
 however (should be about 10:00 my time I would guess).

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

I think we finally had a Trivia question that stumped more than half of you. The question was, "Who was the first champion recognized by the AWA?" Well, it was a trick question, and the key word was RECOGNIZED. The correct answer is Lou Thesz and here's the story behind it. Back in 1962 Thesz and Ed Carpentier had a two of three falls match. Carpentier won the match, but one of the falls he won via DQ. The AWA didn't recognize the title change but midwest promoters did. This led to the formation of the AWA. Promoters in the AWA decided to give Thesz 30 days to defend the title against Carpentier or they would award the newly formed AWA title to him. They did in fact recognize Thesz as their first champion and when the match didn't take place in the allotted 30 day period, Thesz was stripped of the title and it was awarded to Carpentier. (Read the next in your best Walter Cronkite voice) And that's the way it was.

Okay...This issue's question is a little easier and not tricky at all. All we want to know is what song Gorgeous George entered the ring to. Hint: It is still used by a current wrestler, though not the same version. Answer next time.

For those of you who have been asking, the Third Annual Wrestling Forum 128-man elimination tournament will begin in our April 15th issue. Sean takes care of all the balloting there and all the pertinent information will be announced then. Sean has seeded the top 32 wrestlers based on past performance in tournament plus actual ring work and a couple of other factors and the rest of the wrestlers participating have been randomly drawn. The 1986 winner was Ric Flair and the 1987 winner was Ted DiBiase. Here are the top ten rankings...10-Fobby Eaton, 9-Nobuhiko Takada, 8-Owen Hart, 7-Rick Steamboat, 6-Tatsumi Fujinami, 5-Bruiser Brody, 4-Barry Windham, 3-Randy Savage, 2-Ric Flair and 1-Ted DiBiase. These are not official Wrestling Forum rankings or anything of the such, but only for the tournament. For those of you new to these pages, the tournament starts on 4/15 and runs through December and winners are determined by your votes.

I get a lot of questions through here about training schools...how are they, how much, etc. The appear to be pretty standard and cost in the neighborhood of a couple grand. The only trouble is finding one with inside connections in order to find work after graduation. For example, I understand that Buzz Sawyer has opened a school, but with the reputation he has with the promoters, I wouldn't be surprised to see any or all of his students blackballed before they even get a chance. If you check into a school, be sure to ask a bunch of questions and make sure you know exactly what you get for your money. There is one out in the Pittsburgh area where you get nothing at all for your money except a pair of wrestling boots. I understand it is run by a guy called the Shot gun sheriff.

Curt Hennig may really be in bad shape with a back injury. He's been in traction for a while and I understand he's back in the ring, but on a very limited basis. It was feared that he might not ever be able to wrestle again. Look for a title change soon. Wait who ahve hey got left? Oh, no! Not 112 pound greg!

I didn't have the room to reply to Fred Naarisma's letter in the letter's section, so here's my comments...we've got more readers in Baltimore than in any other city than New York, so it may be that one of our locals (or one of Dave's) was showing off a little. A) don't know. b) true. c) maybe. d) maybe. e) Ron is Jimmy's step-father.

LATE AGAIN! Well, it's only the second time in 51 issues, but it's also the second time in the last six months. No mechanical breakdowns this time... just a physical one. I had a 48 hour bout with the flu just at deadline and this time, I had no drive left to type with. Sorry. At least it only looks like a one day delay.

A couple of reader requests and plugs...John McAdam of Nashua, NH was mugged by his computer! John has a tape list that several of you get and trade tapes with. Well, John had a problem with his floppy disc (something a good chiropractor could fix) and his entire mailing list has been erased along with what he owes people. If he owes you something, contact him and he'll rectify things.

Ron Evans has completed the second issue of Amman Ra, the only underground full length comic book in wrestling. It goes for \$2.00 per copy. Ron also does the Wrestling Informer, a bulletin that is centered around the Northwest Promotion and comes out monthly at a cost of \$2.00 per issue or \$16.00 per year. Both are excellent buys. Send money to Ron at 2312 West 23rd Pl, Eugene, OR 97405.

Wade Keller does Pro Wrestling Torch and his latest issue has a hot news story that I co wrote. Wade added his own brand of humor and it's a good one. It's available for \$1.25 per issue and can be had from Box 201844, Minneapolis, MN 55420. By the way, make checks payable to Wade and not the PWT.

King Kong Bundy with hair?!?! Buggy McGraw as a heel?!?! Dumb Trivia questions? It's Legends of World Class every afternoon at 4:00 pm eastern on ESPN. It's nice to look back at WCCW before Fritz went on his rampage of pushing his sons and lying through his teeth.

On the letter writing campaign to WWOR-TV to try to get Pro Wrestling this Week on the air there... address your letters to Farrell Meisel, program director, WWOR-TV, Secaucus, NJ 07094.

That's it for now. See ya all if we survive the 3/27 shows! Bye.

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SEE YOU AFTER THE BIG SHOWS; THANKS FOR READING!

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